

LOCAL COASTAL PLANNING GRANT
EAGLESWOOD TOWNSHIP, OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

WESTECUNK CREEK

WATERFRONT RECREATIONAL PARK

FINAL RECREATIONAL PLAN

SEPTEMBER 30, 1988

PREPARED BY:

ERNST, ERNST & LISSENDEN
CONSULTING ENGINEERS & PLANNERS
P.O. BOX 391
52 HYERS STREET
TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY 08754
(201) 349-2215

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NOAA
COASTAL SERVICES CENTER
2234 SOUTH HOBSON AVENUE
CHARLESTON, SC 29405-2413

PREPARED FOR:

EAGLESWOOD TOWNSHIP
R.R. #1, DIVISION STREET
WEST CREEK, NEW JERSEY 08092
(609) 296-3040

Property of CSC Library

HD211.N5 L63 1988

JAN 27 1988

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DRAFT RECREATIONAL PLAN.....	1-27
ADDENDUM TO DRAFT RECREATIONAL PLAN.....	28
ASBURY PARK PRESS ARTICLE.....	29
TUCKERTON BEACON ARTICLE.....	30
TUCKERTON BEACON ARTICLE.....	31
ASBURY PARK PRESS ARTICLE.....	34
LETTER TO WJRZ RADIO.....	35
PUBLIC NOTICE APPEARING IN ATLANTIC CITY PRESS.....	36
MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING.....	37
CONTRACT AUTHORIZATION RESOLUTION.....	39

LOCAL COASTAL PLANNING GRANT
EAGLESWOOD TOWNSHIP, OCEAN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

WESTECUNK CREEK

WATERFRONT RECREATIONAL PARK ,

DRAFT RECREATIONAL PLAN

PREPARED BY:

ERNST, ERNST & LISSENDEN
CONSULTING ENGINEERS & PLANNERS
P.O. BOX 391
52 HYERS STREET
TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY 08754
(201) 349-2215

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NOAA
COASTAL SERVICES CENTER
2234 SOUTH HOBSON AVENUE
CHARLESTON, SC 29405-2413

PREPARED FOR:

EAGLESWOOD TOWNSHIP
R.R. #1, DIVISION STREET
WEST CREEK, NEW JERSEY 08092
(609) 296-3040

Property of CSC Library

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

I.	INVENTORY OF LANDS.....	2
	STAFFORD FORGE TO FLOODGATES.....	2
	FLOODGATES TO U.S. 9.....	3
	U.S. 9 TO LITTLE EGG HARBOR BAY.....	4
II.	RECREATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY.....	5
III.	LAND UTILIZATION/ACQUISITION STRATEGY.....	8
IV.	PARK DEVELOPMENT.....	11
V.	IMPACTS.....	15
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	16

APPENDICES

	PUBLIC NOTICE OF MEETING.....	17
	U.S. DEPT. OF INTERIOR CORRESPONDENCE.....	18
	NJ NATURAL HERITAGE PROGRAM CORRESPONDENCE.....	19
	PHOTOGRAPHS OF WESTECUNK CREEK.....	22

INTRODUCTION

The largest stream lying primarily within Eagleswood Township is the Westecunk Creek. This waterway finds its source near the northwestern corner of the Township, in Little Egg Harbor Township. It feeds extensive areas of cranberry bogs above the dam at Stafford Forge, just west of the Garden State Parkway. The creek then flows in a relatively natural state through extensive areas of low-lying wetlands, below the dam at the forge, and runs past the Township's main population center at West Creek. Below the floodgates just west of Route 9, the stream becomes a meandering estuary accessible from Dock Road, and flows out to Little Egg Harbor Bay.

While there are significant contiguous tracts of land devoted to open space with the Township, these lands are largely devoted to the management and maintenance of game and non-game wildlife species.

Due to extensive areas of the Township defined as wetlands, regulation by the Coastal Areas Facility Review Act (CAFRA), and some areas of the Township regulated by the State Pinelands Commission, development of the Township is restricted. As a result, much of the Township is composed of lands where future rateable expansion is very limited. Consequently, the potential for municipal funding of further development of public active and passive recreational space is, likewise, limited.

However, through a systematic and strategic evaluation of lands adjacent to the Westecunk Creek, the prospects for acquisition of key parcels of land for public use as a stream corridor park are discussed in this recreational plan.

I. INVENTORY OF LANDS

STAFFORD FORGE TO FLOODGATES

This reach of the stream begins at the impoundment structure immediately west of Martha Road (Ocean County Route 606). The stream runs under the bridge on Martha Road. At this location steep slopes run down from the road to the streambanks. Some foaming of the stream is observed at this point, due to the aeration at the spillway. The stream becomes of relatively flat stream with gentle and even drop as it flows east.

Large culverts carry the stream under the Garden State Parkway, a location navigable to the canoeist. Beyond the Parkway the stream is in its natural state, bounded by lands of the Stafford Forge Wildlife Management Area. The stream then flows on and through a municipality owned parcel, Block 39, Lot 35.

Fed by Barton's Branch, the stream flows through the lands of a proposed subdivision. No development of that parcel is proposed within the wetlands bounding the stream.

The creek remains, at present, in a natural state in this reach, with wildlife in general abundance. The first significant mark of civilization here comes at the crossing of overhead wires at an easement of the Atlantic Electric Company. Although the unmarred beauty of deep woods is interrupted here, it is important to note that the plant species which proliferate at the edge of this linear clearing provide an abundance of high quality cover, and food sources for a variety of wildlife.

A few hundred yards downstream of this point the uninterrupted expanse of vacant land bordering Westecunk Creek yields to the modest population center of the Township. The backyards of residential properties fronting on North Street meet the streambank on the south. On the north, vacant land exists, including a Township-owned parcel, Block 39, Lot 52.

After a short reach of uninterrupted streambank, the creek reaches the floodgate area and cascades over the deteriorating concrete level control structure.

FLOODGATES TO US 9

While this reach of Westecunk Creek is short in distance, it is an area which has great potential for use as it lies within easy reach of much of the Township's population.

Immediately downstream from the floodgates, a pool of water deeper than most other areas of the creek, has been scoured by water falling over the floodgates through the course of time. This spot has been a favored swimming area in the past.

Beyond this location, the stream goes under the Railroad Avenue Bridge, at the Ocean County Sewerage Authority's facility, and then continues adjacent to Mill Road. Just before the creek veers away from the road, a small, sandy landing area leads down from the pavement. It provides boating and other recreational access to the stream. Some erosion occurs at this location. From here the stream travels towards Route 9.

US 9 TO LITTLE EGG HARBOR BAY

At Route 9, the creek passes under a bridge and after a series of bends and emerges with a markedly different character. Instead of a shaded creek with a combination of swamp hardwoods, atlantic white cedar and pitch pine forests lining the streambanks, here, non-woody species associated with an estuarine regime are present. The woodlands open up to either side for impressive distant vistas. The scent of bay air is noticed.

Three major islands lie in the stream bed, totalling nearly 2 acres in area. They are vacant and privately owned.

Continuing, with Dock Road roughly parallel, Westecunk Creek runs its course past the municipal boat launch and private dockage facilities. A number of residences line the road, interspersed with vacant land. Township land holding in this area include Block 4, Lots 72, 134, 143.02, ; Block 4.01.

To the north of the creek there are expanses of undisturbed wetlands within the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge.

As the stream approaches its mouth, it broadens significantly and its character becomes more like the bay. It reaches the bay at the foot of Dock Road. At this location, on Block 1, Lot 1, owned by the Township. A pavilion and bulkhead are maintained for recreational purposes.

II. RECREATIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMUNITY

With respect to the Department of Environmental Protection's "Outdoor Recreation Plan of New Jersey" (SCORP), the recreational needs of the population of Ocean County are clearly defined.

The intensity of need for open space within the County is defined as moderate, based on the acreage presently available in comparison to the population. However, based on what is defined as "balanced land use", the need for additional open recreational space is given the highest priority rating.

This balanced land use deficit considers the amount of additional open space required to satisfy the state's open space goals.

The need for particular recreational facilities in the County are outlined in the SCORP and are listed below with numerical values of 1 through 5, 1 being the lowest need and 5 the highest. Facility defecits, and surpluses in parentheses, are expressed in activity days and represent the extent to which the projected 1990 supply of park and recreational facilities can meet estimated peak day demand.

	<u>NEEDS RANKING</u>	<u>FACILITY DEFECITS</u>
Swimming (freshwater)	5	26,118
Swimming (saltwater)	5	42,232
*Motor Boating & Boat Fishing (freshwater)	0	(273)
Motor Boating & Boat Fishing (saltwater)	3	8,919
Hunting	4	10,780
Camping	1	367
*Hiking	4	14,661
*Bicycling	5	70,023
Horseback Riding	2	882
Tennis	4	14,664
Basketball	0	(5434)
Baseball/Softball	2	7,227
Soccer/Football	2	9,143
Playground Activities	0	(18577)
Golf	0	1,257
Snow Skiing (Downhill)	5	
*Picnic	4	2,163
Ice Skating	0	(53,496)

County Totals

199,519

Recreational facilities marked with an aserisk (*) are those which may be made available at Westecunk Creek Park.

This priority system indicates, relatively high merits of proposed facilities.

As cited in the Rules on Coastal Resources and Development (N.J.A.C. 7:7E-7.3):

"Resort/recreation uses and commercial fisheries uses shall have priority over all other uses in Monmouth, Ocean, Atlantic, and Cape May counties with highest priority reserved for those uses that provide facilities for people of all ages and for those people with physical handicaps.

This further reinforces the state's directives for park development within the region.

Locally, the need for facilities which take advantage of the natural resources present at the Westecunk Creek are considerable. While the creek is not inaccessible to the general population, public access points are infrequent, and their usefulness is hampered by limits on parking.

Obviously, the types of recreational facilities which might be developed in and around Westecunk Creek have limitations. The sorts of activities which are sensible here are primarily those which are specifically water related. Also feasible are those which can be adapted to the linear space defined by the stream corridor.

The facilities which may be developed for Westecunk Creek are listed below, but are not necessarily limited to: boating, canoeing, swimming, fishing, bicycling paths, hiking/nature trails, and picnicking.

III. LAND UTILIZATION/ACQUISITION STRATEGY

At present, there are two key open space areas which can provide a basis and framework for park development. The Federal government has significant holdings of primarily estuarine wetlands, known as the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. This area, and proposed additional lands create unbroken expanses of open spaces at the mouth of the creek, where it meets Little Egg Harbor Bay.

The western end of the area of this study is bounded by the State of New Jersey's Stafford Forge Wildlife Management Area.

These two areas are linked by the creek itself. The most desirable type of park development possible is one which provides a continuous linear park paralleling the creek, whereby people can enjoy an uninterrupted reach of this waterway. Additionally, the environmental quality of the creek can best be preserved through creation of a park which, in effect, serves as a buffer zone. In reality, the creek itself offers a linear open space for recreation, in its present state. A desirable objective would be the expansion of this strand of open space onto the adjoining lands.

In examining the open space/land use overlay map accompanying this report, one can clearly see the substantial extent of currently vacant land which abuts the creek. While the resources of the Township's population are limited, a concerted effort should be made to obtain as much of this land as practicable. Lands which should be targeted for acquisition are those which may be of limited value to their current owners.

Those parcels which are unused, and do not abut residential or commercial lands under the same ownership, are those which offer great potential. Particularly, those lands which are environmentally restrictive (i.e. wetlands, unsuitable soils, etc.) might be obtained at a fairly low relative cost per unit of area, while having a high recreational value. Of great importance in selecting parcels for acquisition would be accessibility. Most, if not all, parcels which should be targeted have water access; however, those which specifically have road frontage are of prime importance in determining which lands have the greatest usefulness.

Beyond this sort of outright purchase of vacant land, there are a number of other strategies which would result in practical forms of acquisition. As shown on the open space/land use overlay, lands which are proposed to be developed may be encouraged or even mandated to reserve that portion of the land which is delineated as wetland for a conservation easement, or outright dedication to the parklands.

The Gough Subdivision provides an example of such an easement. Effort should be made in such cases in the future so that street access is provided. Even a narrow access easement from a new street with a path could provide this. To implement this in the future, an ordinance specifically relating to this goal could be adopted by the Township.

In an evaluation of the Township's Property Tax Map and list of owners, two parcels at the foot of North Street, Block 39, Lots 48.01 and 48.02, appear to have unknown ownership.

A determination of the actual ownership would require further and complete title search before any action to obtain this land could be reasonably undertaken by the Township. However these parcels might be obtained with a minimum of funds.

The least expensive way to increase public holdings of lands adjacent to Westecunk Creek is through private gifts. At first glance, this route may appear unrealistic, but it is possible to demonstrate its practicality. Tax benefits could be realized by individuals by donating wetlands and other parcels which are fundamentally useless for development. Those who are clear thinking and civic-minded could make this possibility a reality.

As seen on the open space/land use overlay map, there are several parcels of land already owned by the Township. Although are limited in area, these parcels may serve as a framework for expansion of holdings.

IV. PARK DEVELOPMENT

From a standpoint of need and economic feasibility there are several particular locations which should be thoroughly investigated for their potential incorporation into a park, in its initial phase of development.

Beginning at the upstream end of the study area, at Stafford Forge, the point where the stream passes under Martha Road offers a potential site for launching canoes and boats which draw little water and can be carried. At this location people currently use the stream in such a manner. There are severe limitations existing here, and throughout much of the stream corridor as wetland (hydric) soils series, such as Manahawkin Muck, Berryland Sand, Sulphemists, Sulfaquents, and Atsion Sand would restrict the type of facilities allowable. Perhaps a simple well-defined path at the location of an existing swath, could be constructed to the water's edge, affording access, while preventing erosion. Nearby, at the intersection of Old Forge and Martha Road, a parking area might be developed in conjunction with the State Wildlife Management Area.

The open access created along the Atlantic Electric Co. easement between Forge Road and Province Road is one which is of considerable interest in development of the park. Typically, the use of the area of power easements is restricted to a great degree.

However, with inquiry to, and agreement with the power company, some limited use of this connecting link may be achieved. Probably, the most likely use would be as part of a trail system. How this would link up with other paths would be determined as acquisition of parcels of land for the park progresses. It is anticipated that foot trail and bicycle path loops of various length might be developed in the park. The potential of using the easement for recreation should be integrated with the development of priorities for acquisition of adjacent tracts.

As stated in the Land Utilization/Acquisition Strategy section of this report, parcels of land where ownership is unclear might be obtained through a standard legal governmental taking. If the parcels at question on North Street appear to qualify as such, they could be incorporated into an overall development plan. While they do have road frontage, their potential usefulness for recreational parking or access sites would require further investigation and wetland delineation to. Yet they do offer possibilities for some sort of structured use.

Due to the depth of the stream just below the floodgates, and the proximity to Silver Lake Drive, the creek is better suited to swimming here than any other location. With minimal land acquisition at this spot, a significant addition could be made to the recreational facilities available.

Again, an analysis at a smaller scale would be required to determine the most advantageous spatial configuration of a swimming area, access and parking facilities, and if space allows, a picnicking site.

It may be necessary to evaluate the existing floodgate for its safety, and upgrade it structurally if required.

Consideration might be given at that time to revamping the structure in a minor way to make it easier for canoes and small boats to pass.

The area between Railroad Avenue and Route 9 would be an area which could be developed for further active recreational sites, by virtue of its ready access to the main roads, and certain portions of usable frontage on Mill Street, notably at the sandy landing area. Proper siting of recreational structures and parking on the small area of Downer soils (appearing on the soils overlay) could bring an additional formal access point to the park.

This area could be more or less, directly linked to the portion of the park at the floodgates, if a formal pedestrian crossing were defined at Railroad Avenue. The intersection could also serve as the site for signage and a park directory for visitors because of its high visibility, although additional signage could be provided on Route 9.

Beyond Route 9, immediately along Dock Road, there is a considerable percentage of developed land. Here, private and public boat launching and dockage facilities line the road, along with a number of homes. Some vacant land exists, but would not truly form a continuous network of open space on the South side of the creek. However, increased park holdings in this area would relate favorably to the proposed additional lands of the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge (NWR).

To the north of the creek substantial holdings of the NWR , already exist. Additionally, there are expanses of vacant land here. Due to the broad area of wetlands to the north of the creek, it is unlikely that any formal facilities could be built here; however, increasing land holdings could help assure the continuous linkage of open parklands to the maximum extent possible.

The stream has several islands in its midst which do offer good locations for informal picnicing for boaters and could service as fine places for wildlife observation. Acquisition of the islands located on Lot 1 of Blocks 4.02, 4.03 and 4.04 would be very important , as they are a critical area in an environmental and visual sense.

At the mouth of Westecunk Creek, the Township pavilion and bulkhead presently serve as municipal parkland, and would continue to provide recreational potential as one element in a linear park system.

V. IMPACTS

The major impacts of significance through the development of the proposed park systems will be of generally positive nature. Most obvious will be the increase in lands available for public recreational purposes.

This increase in recreational facilities and use will have a number of corollary effects:

1. Maintenance of wetland and habitat quality and protection of existing open land to assuring the continuity of the natural resources of the creek, thereby assisting in maintaining the livelihood of those dependent on these resources.
2. Some increase in disturbance to the natural environment and wildlife during construction phase of facilities.
3. Some increase in commerce related to boating, fishing, etc., locally.
4. Potential increase in value for lands which are convenient to new facilities.
5. Some decrease in the lands which, in the future, could provide additional tax ratables.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Coastal Resources. Feb. 3, 1986. Rules on Coastal Resources and Development.
2. State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish, Game and Wildlife. Guide to Wildlife Management Areas.
3. State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program. November 1984. Outdoor Recreation Plan of New Jersey.
4. Stockton State College, May 1984. Environmental Report for Eagleswood Township, Ocean County, New Jersey.
5. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service. April 1980. Soil Survey of Ocean County, New Jersey.
6. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. January 1987. Final Environmental Assessment - Proposed additions to Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, Atlantic, Burlington and Ocean Counties, New Jersey.
7. U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. July 1985. Wetlands of New Jersey.

JOHN P. KELLY
MAYOR / COMMITTEEMAN

KENNETH G. HOLMAN
COMMITTEEMAN

JOSEPH F. MEGLINO
COMMITTEEMAN

JOETTE GRUNNER DODDS
TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR

TOWNSHIP OF EAGLESWOOD
RR #1 - DIVISION ST.
WEST CREEK, N.J. 08092
(609) 296-3040

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Township Committee of the Township of Eagleswood will a Public Hearing on September 27, 1988 at 7:00PM at the Eagleswood Village Recreation Center on Rt 9 in Staffordville. The purpose is to receive public comment on the Local Coastal Planning Grant Draft of Proposed Recreational Area in Eagleswood Township. The Public Comments will be incorporated into the final submission to the Local Coastal Planning Grant of the NJDEP.

Joette G. Dodds
Township Administrator/Clerk

Posted in the B&D on 9/16/88
Post Office
Municipal Building

Hand Delivered to Beacon on 9/16/88
Atlantic City Press
Asbury Park Press

Published in the Atlantic City Press 9/19/88



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge
Brigantine Division
PO Box 72
Oceanville, New Jersey 08231

August 25, 1988

Joette Dodds
Eagleswood Township
146 Division Street
West Creek, NJ 08092

Dear Joette

The proposed township park along Westecunk Creek would compliment the Fish and Wildlife Service acquisition in Eagleswood. The two enclosed environmental assessments may be useful to you as you develop your proposal. I have also enclosed a list of the tracts that the Service would like to acquire in future years.

If we can provide additional assistance, please contact me.

Sincerely

David L. Beall
Refuge Manager

Enclosures



Acc'd 4/14/88
Copy File

New Jersey Natural Heritage Program

Office of Natural Lands Management
xx
(609) 984-1339
CN 404, TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625

September 9, 1988

Joette Dodds, Township Administrator
Township of Eagleswood
RR#1 - Division Street
West Creek, NJ 08092

Re: Proposed Westecunk Creek Park Site

Dear Ms. Dodds:

Thank you for your letter requesting information on rare species and natural communities at the above referenced site in Eagleswood Twp., Ocean County.

The Natural Heritage Database does not have any records for rare plants, animals or natural communities on the project site. The attached list of rare species and natural communities are from records in the vicinity of the project site. Additionally, enclosed is a list of rare vertebrates of Ocean County together with a description of their habitats. If suitable habitat is present at the project site, these species would have potential to be present. For additional information on these or other vertebrate animals, we recommend you contact the DEP Division of Fish, Game, and Wildlife.

PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED 'CAUTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS ON NHP DATA'.

Thank you for consulting the Natural Heritage Program. The fee to cover the cost of processing this data request is \$30.00. Payment should be made to the Nature Conservancy- The NJ Natural Heritage Program. Please feel free to contact us again regarding any future data requests.

Sincerely,
Thomas F. Breden
Thomas F. Breden
Coordinator

cc: JoAnn Frier-Murza
Thomas Hampton



NATURAL LANDS MANAGEMENT

CAUTIONS AND RESTRICTIONS ON NATURAL HERITAGE DATA

The quantity and quality of data collected by the Natural Heritage Program is dependent on the research and observations of many individuals and organizations. Not all of this information is the result of comprehensive or site-specific field surveys. Some natural areas in New Jersey have never been thoroughly surveyed. As a result, new locations for plant and animal species are continuously added to the data base. Since data acquisition is a dynamic, ongoing process, this Office cannot provide a definitive statement on the presence, absence, or condition of biological elements in any part of New Jersey. Information supplied by the Natural Heritage Program summarizes existing data known to the program at the time of the request regarding the biological elements or location in question. The information should never be regarded as final statements on the elements or areas being considered, nor should they be substituted for on-site surveys required for environmental assessments. The attached data is provided as one source of information to assist others in the preservation of natural diversity.

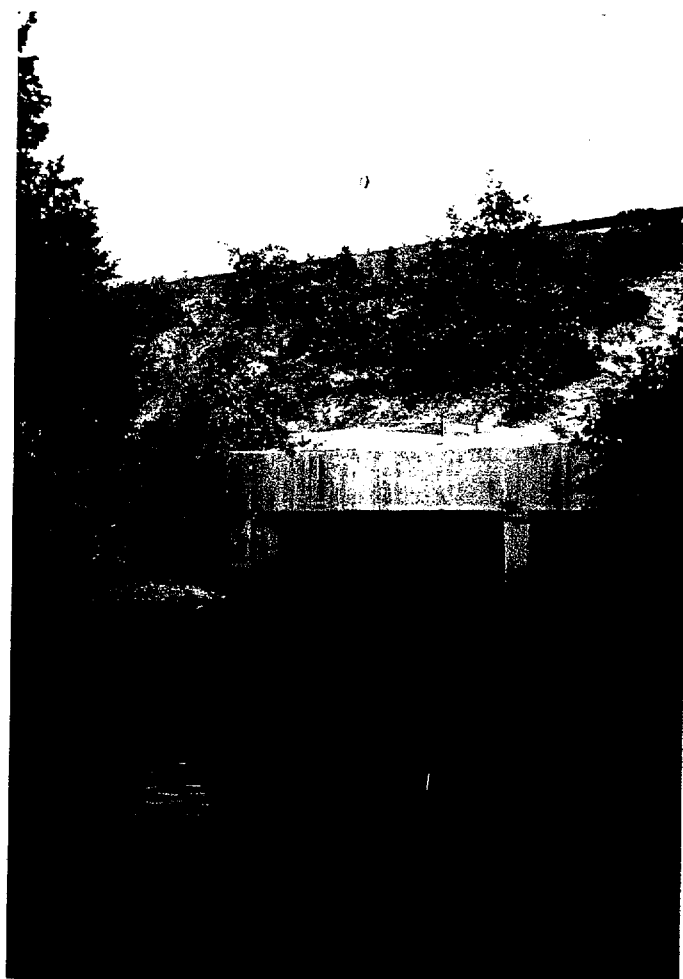
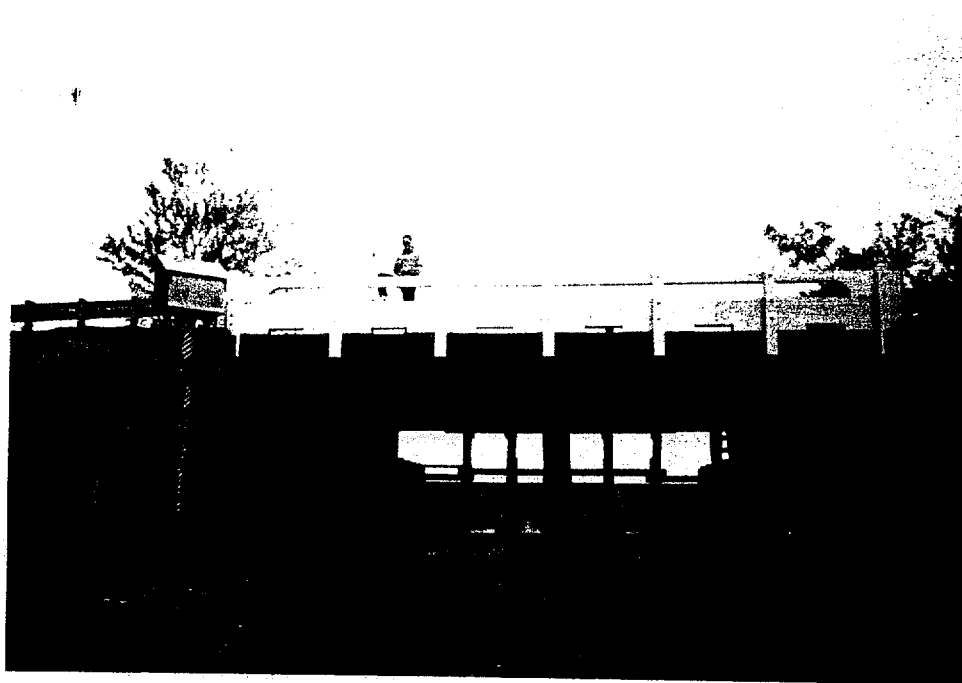
This office cannot provide a letter of interpretation or a statement addressing the classification of wetlands as defined by the Freshwater Wetlands Act. Requests for such determination should be sent to the DEP Division of Coastal Resources, Bureau of Freshwater Wetlands, CN 402, Trenton, NJ 08625.

Information provided by this database may not be published without first obtaining the written permission of the Office of Natural Lands Management. In addition, the Natural Heritage Program must be credited as an information source in any publication of data.

GENERAL VICINITY OF PROPOSED WESTCUNK CREEK PARK
EAGLESWOOD TWP., OCEAN COUNTY
RECORDS FOR RARE SPECIES AND NATURAL COMMUNITIES
PRESENTLY RECORDED IN THE NATURAL HERITAGE DATABASE

NAME	COMMON NAME	FEDERAL STATUS	STATE STATUS	GRANK	SRANK	DATE OBSERVED
CAREX BARRATTII	BARRATT'S SEDGE	C2	LP	G3	S3	1911-05-07
CAREX BARRATTII	BARRATT'S SEDGE	C2	LP	G3	S3	1911-05-08
CIRSIIUM VIRGINIANUM	VIRGINIA THISTLE			G7	S1	1903-09-06
GENTIANA AUTUMNALIS	PINE BARREN GENTIAN	3C	LP	G3	S3	1910-10-11
HYLA ANDERSONII	PINE BARRENS TREEFROG	C2	LE	G4	S4	???-??-??
RHYNCHOSPORA KNIESKERNII	KNIESKERN'S BEAKED RUSH	C1	LP	G1	S1	1903-09-06

DAM AND
MARTHA ROAD
BRIDGE



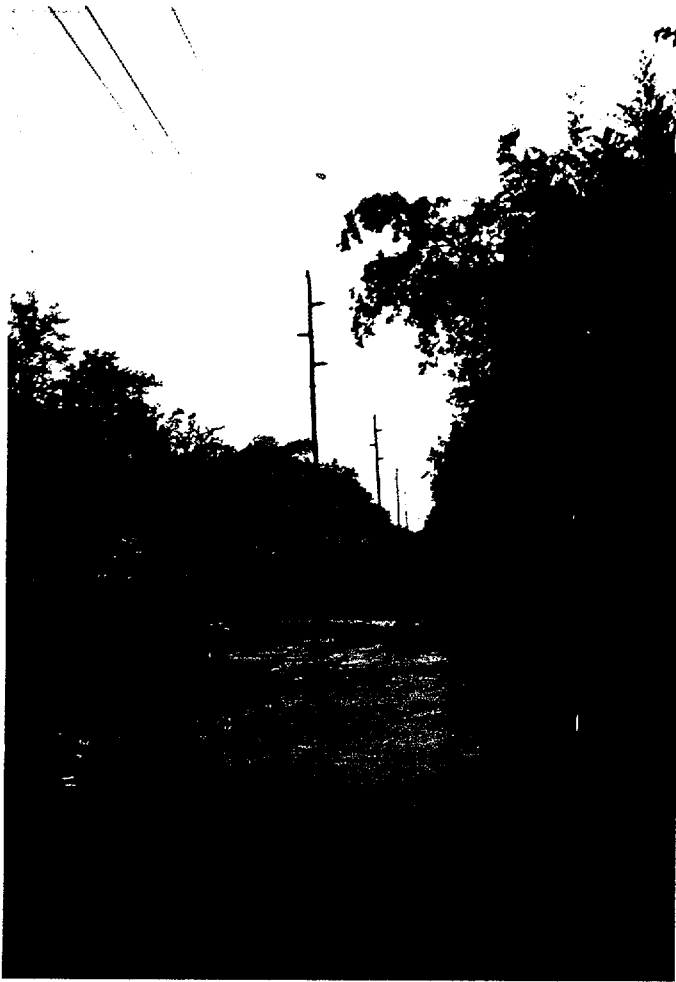
GARDEN STATE
PARKWAY CULVERTS



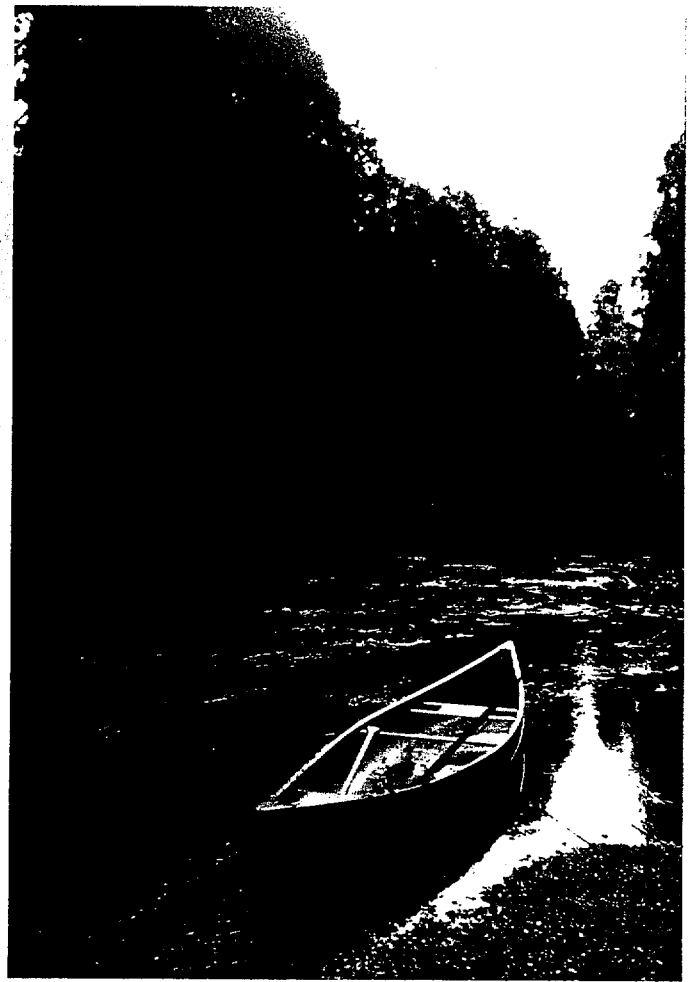
WHITE CEDAR
FORESTATION



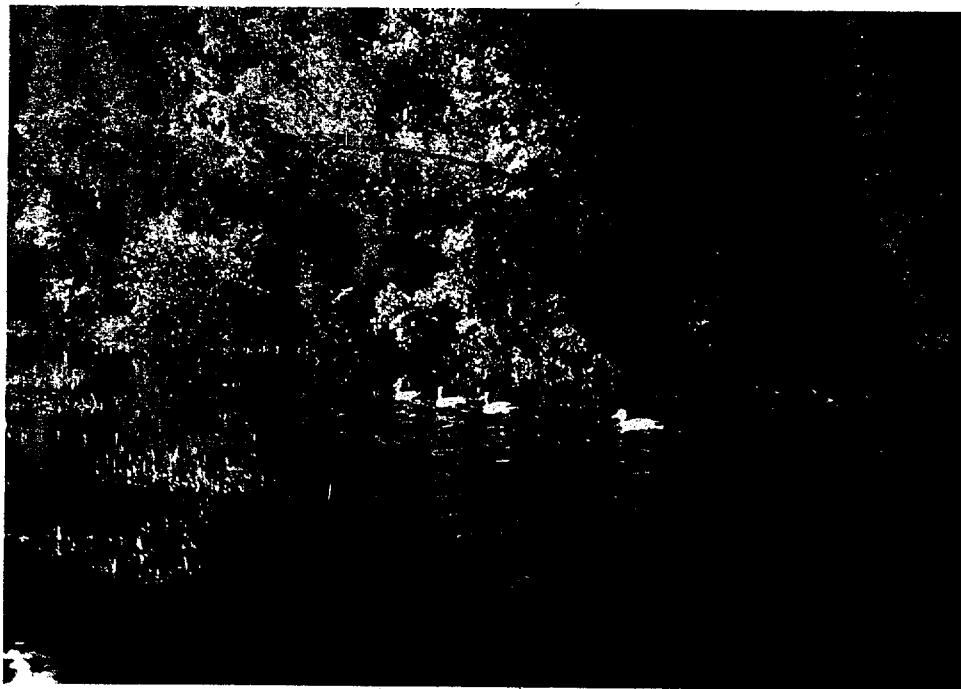
VISUAL QUALITY FROM THE PARKWAY TO RAILROAD AV



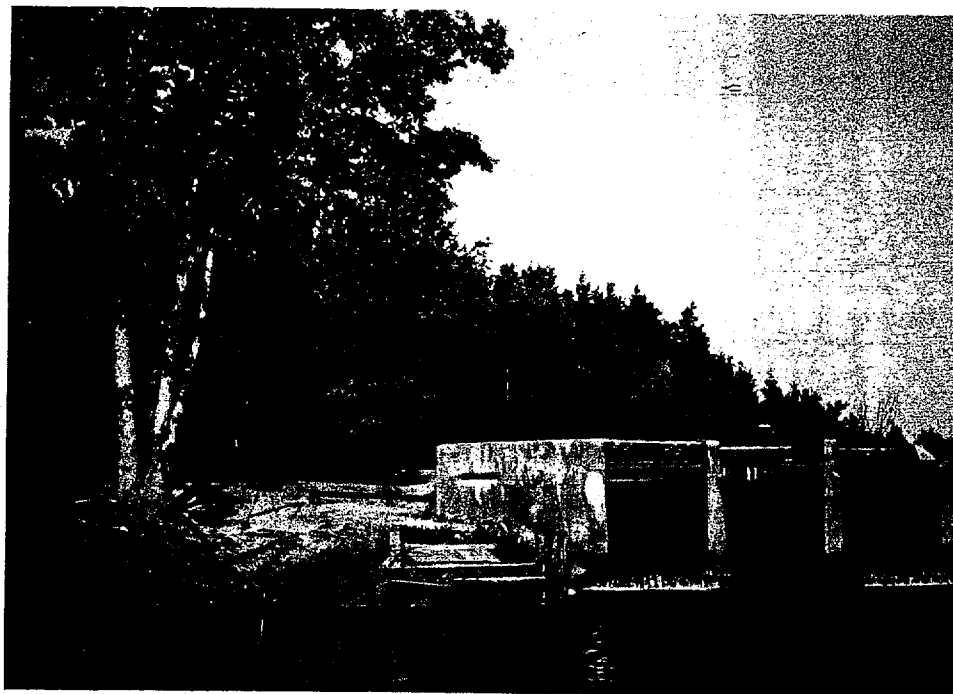
ATLANTIC ELECTRIC
COMPANY EASEMENT



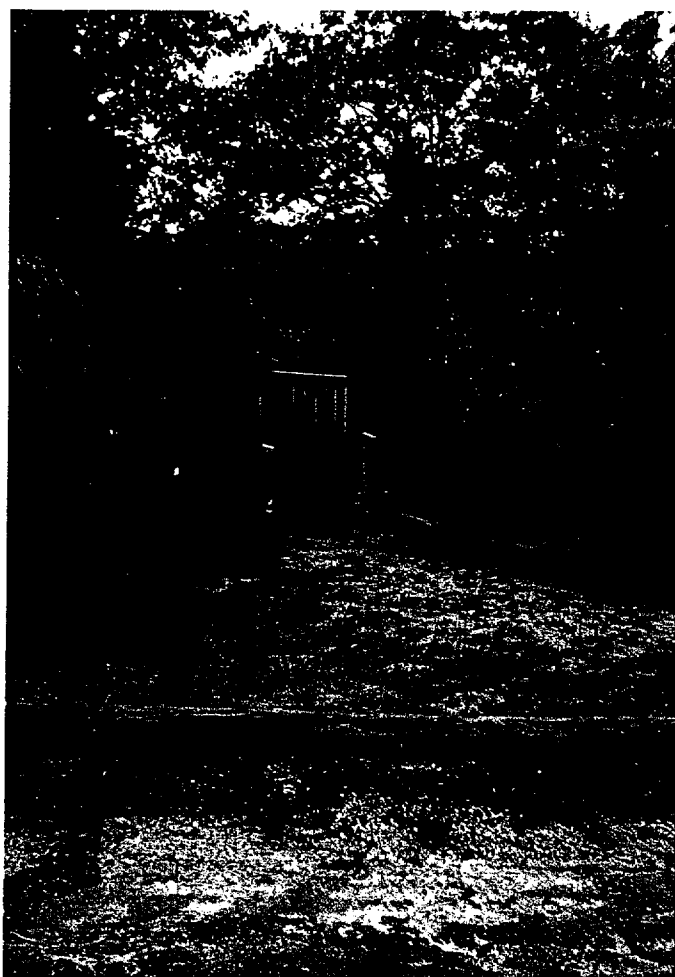
SAND BAR



WILDLIFE ON THE CREEK



THE FLOODGATES (FROM THE CREEK)



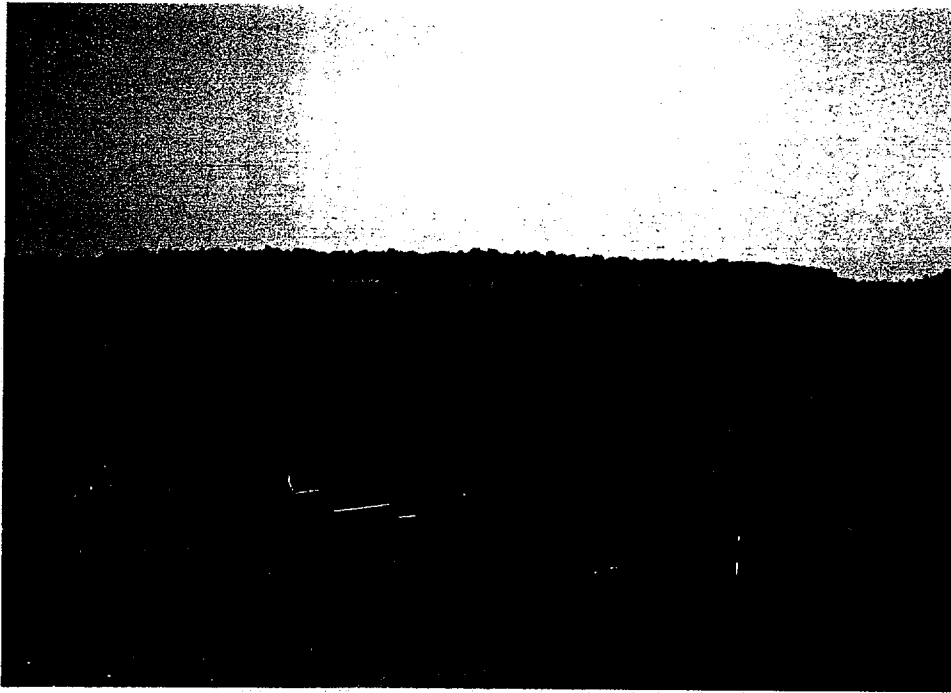
THE FLOODGATES
(FROM SILVER LAKE ROAD)



TERMINUS OF
NORTH STREET



VISUAL QUALITY
APPROACHING DOCK
ROAD FROM
UPSTREAM



DOCK ROAD
WATERFRONT

ADDENDUM TO DRAFT RECREATIONAL PLAN

On September 27, 1988, a public hearing was held in Eagleswood Township to receive input on the Draft Recreational Plan for a waterfront park on the Westecunk Creek.

The most significant points of public interest were concerning the types of facilities to be located at the park. Beyond the State's overall recommendations in SCORP, the Township is lacking in playground equipment. While this is not a regional problem, locally there is a need for these facilities and they should be incorporated into an overall plan as it develops. Additionally, the need for public restrooms was voiced and this too should be addressed. Obviously, the siting would be tied to the location of recreational facilities which would attract the largest concentrations of park uses. Based upon public comment, a greater emphasis on picnicking facilities should be stressed in final acquisition and construction plans.

Of interest at the meeting is the water quality of the Creek. It was agreed by all that water quality tests of sufficient frequency to assure that the proposed swimming facilities would be safe for the public.

A final concern of the Townspeople was the need for security and regulation of park areas, so that public health and safety is maintained. Furthermore, it is vital that a park be developed in such a manner that provides ample facilities while not infringing on the character of Eagleswood's quiet neighborhoods.

Eagleswood funded for recreation area

Press Manahawkin Bureau

EAGLESWOOD TOWNSHIP —

State funds will help the Township Committee plan a swimming, canoeing and recreation area in the township.

The state Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Coastal Planning has awarded the township a \$7,500 to plan a recreation area on a 50-acre tract bordered by Route 9, Railroad Avenue, Forge Road and Mill Street, said Mayor John P. Kelly.

The committee attempted to obtain a grant from the DEP last year, but was denied, Kelly said.

The committee then invited DEP officials to inspect the site and listen to what town officials had proposed to do with the land, he said.

The committee and the recreation commission had planned to install a canoe launching area, dredge a swimming hole, and create an area for other forms of recreation, he said.

The site, which was once a cranberry bog but has since been overgrown, is considered freshwater wet-

lands and can not be developed in any other way, Kelly said.

After meeting with the mayor, the DEP became very enthusiastic about the recreation area plans and the township was awarded the grant, he said.

"They liked our proposal to keep development out of the area, keep the waterway clean and provide something nice-looking and recreational," he said.

The grant will pay for the engineering that must be done to determine if a small portion of the tract

can be paved for parking and if a building, which would house restrooms and other public accommodations, could be constructed, he said.

If the engineer finds the site can be developed as proposed, DEP officials said a grant to fund the work would probably be awarded to the township, he said.

Also last night, the township committee announced it had been awarded a \$17,000 state recycling grant that will fund the purchase of an \$11,000 recycling trailer.

Eagleswood granted funds for park study

By **PATRICK ROMANO**
Staff Writer

WEST CREEK — The state Department of Environmental Protection Division of Coastal Resources has awarded Eagleswood Township a local coastal planning grant of \$7,500 to develop plans for a proposed recreational park facility that eventually will be on Railroad Avenue along Westecunk Creek to the public dock area.

Mayor John P. Kelly announced the grant at the Township Committee meeting Tuesday night.

The township now has until September to draw up plans for the first phase of development, according to Administrator Joette Dodds.

The project will encompass a 50-acre area bordered by Route 9, Railroad Avenue, Forge Road and Mill Street. The first phase of the project will be to draw up a planning document to develop an area that runs half way up Railroad Avenue along Westecunk Creek.

If the area, which includes remnants of an old cranberry bog, can be developed as proposed, Kelly said the DEP might fund the actual construction.

"We're looking at a canoe run and a passive recreational facility where families can take their children and relax," Dodds said, adding that she sees it as an

"We're looking at a canoe run and a passive recreational facility where families can take their children and relax"

JOETTE DODDS
ADMINISTRATOR



alternative to the Floodgate problems of recent years.

"In order to swim down there, you had to cross over people's property," she said. "In the past, we had to close that area because kids would be drinking and cursing. Now we'll have an area where everyone can go swimming."

The mayor said he would like to get the Ocean County parks system involved with the project because it has the experience and know-how to supervise and manage such a facility.

"I am meeting with Freeholder (Director John) Bartlett Jr. on the matter but there is no guarantee that the Parks Department will take over the project."

The committee now is working to get funding to purchase the property it wants to see developed.

"We are eventually going for the acquisition of the property," Dodds said, "but for now we have to concentrate on getting the planning document done by the end of September so we don't lose our funding and so we can get under way."



At the Sawmill swimming hole, from bottom left, Kelly Foy, 1½ of Mystic Island, Jillian Eble, 1, of Tuckerton and Christine Capobianco, 1½ of Tuckerton along with Julie Eble of Tuckerton and Jennifer Paulsen of Manahawkin, both sitting, all watch Jamie Lynn Eble, 4, show off her fancy tube.

The 'old swimming hole' sought by many in West Ck.

By DAVID MOORE
Staff Writer

WEST CREEK — If you're looking for a "swimming hole" here, officially there isn't one, but there are plans in the works for that and much more.

Many years ago, Eagleswood Township Committeeman Kenneth G. Holman said there were several spots where one could find a child swinging from a tire swing into the "old swimming hole" to get cooled off during a hot day in the summer.

But that's all gone now as residential areas have grown in the township and it has turned into a difficult chore to try to find just one.

Of course, some residents have complained there are very few recreational areas in the township.

Why?

Because the strict residential makeup of the community often collides with those trying to have fun or a problem of people hanging out until early morning hours, Mayor John P. Kelly said.

But for the most part, many people do understand what's happening, Kelly said.

Holman also said that on several occasions recreation spots have been chosen by township people but eventually they turn into hangouts, then residents complain.

Even the tennis courts and basketball hoops near the Municipal Building are off limits.

But residents and visitors, to get cooled off,

See Swim on page 10

Swim

Continued from page 1

still slip into the cedar waters that were used when the cranberry industry boomed.

Under plans now in the works by the Township Committee, a feasibility study is nearly complete that could provide for swimming near Route 9 and Railroad Avenue, or Mill Street and Forge Road.

The Route 9 and Railroad Avenue site, known locally as the "Flood Gates" and formally used to provide irrigation for cranberries, used to be quite a nice "swimming hole," Holman said.

But eventually many problems cropped up and the area had to be closed to swimmers.

The Mill Street and Forge Road site, formerly a sawmill, also could be developed as a "swimming hole."

Holman said he believes that, with the available knowledge and technology of developing lakes today, one smaller than the Manahawkin Lake or Lake Pohatcong in Tip Seaman Park, Tuckerton, could be developed and not be plagued by the high fecal coliform counts that have kept these lakes closed.

A high fecal coliform count occurs due to non-point source pollution, such as fertilizer; bird waste and other contaminants that may wash into a lake after a storm.

Kelly said the state Department of Environmental Protection has provided a \$7,500 grant so the township can study the entire Westecunk Creek area.

"Eventually, we would like to see the entire stretch of the creek area

developed as a canoe trail," Kelly said.

Along the proposed trail would be picnic areas at several locations. The trail would run from Stafford Forge to Barnegat Bay, a distance of about 10 miles.

"Several state agencies, including the DEP, are thrilled with the idea since the area would remain undeveloped," Kelly said.

A waterfront recreational area of this size and intensity is difficult to manage and finance by the township alone so Eagleswood officials are discussing the possibility of placing this project in the domain of the Ocean County Parks and Recreation Department.

Kelly said because of the small size of the municipality it would be unable to manage such a facility. The estimated annual cost to maintain such a facility would be more than \$50,000 a year. The cost for the entire project would be more than \$1 million.

Kelly said he has received a "verbal agreement" from Ocean County Freeholder John C. Bartlett Jr. of Pine Beach, director of the parks department, but nothing formal can be done until a study of the area is complete.

Bartlett said the parks department is now looking to establish two future park locations in the county. One is in Manchester Township and the other at points south of Manahawkin.

Bartlett said whenever there is a commitment by a municipality to help in establishing a county park, the county takes a serious interest in the proposal.

"That's how we've been able to triple our county park space in the area over the last three years," Bartlett said.

He said he was expecting to visit the proposed area in the near future.

Kelly said that if the project is approved it could take a minimum of three years and more than likely five years for it to be completed in phases.

The swimming area is a priority, he said.

Kelly said the township possibly would provide 25 percent of the funding for the project through grants and loans. Hopefully, the county will help out with the remainder.

A Green Acres loan, which is a long-term, low-interest state loan, is likely the funding mechanism for the project, he said.

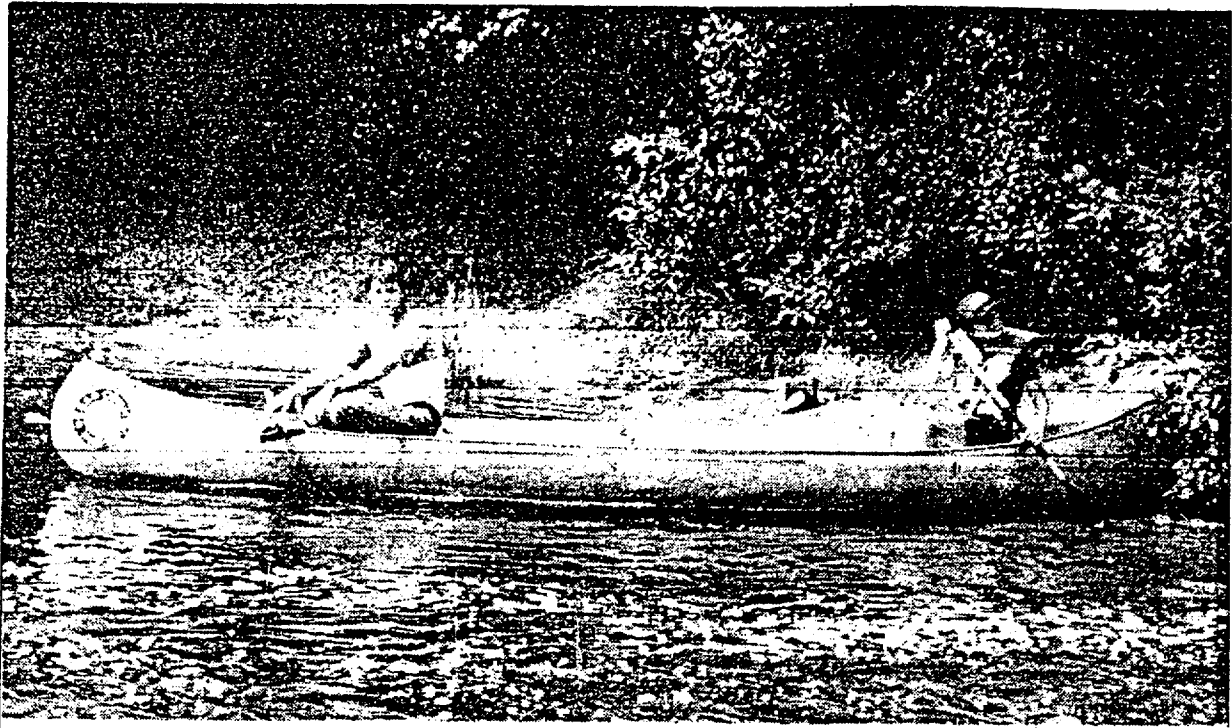
In a related recreational issue, Holman is planning to use a three-year plan to bring the municipal dock areas back up to par.

In the past, the township has found them to be more of a liability than an asset.

"We don't want to make money on the docks, we just want to improve them so they pay for themselves," Holman said of the 62 available boat slips.

Recently, the township increased the rental fees from \$80 a year to \$120 and as improvements are made to the slips the rates will increase on an annual basis.

The township recently won a court battle that now allows additional slips on the west of the creek area to fall under its control after years of litigation involving who owned the waterfront property.



CAN YOU CANOE? — Scott Sebastinas, 14, left, and Ray Bartlett, 10, both of West Creek, can and did as they beat the heat at Stafford Forge on Friday.

Times-Beacon photo by Anita Grayson

Eagleswood hears park plan

Press Manahawkin Bureau

EAGLESWOOD TOWNSHIP — Township officials hope a proposal to turn a small part of the Westcunk Creek into a recreation area will enable the town to get its first county park.

The Township Committee last night heard a conceptual plan on the feasibility of creating recreation areas along the creek. The study was financed by a \$7,500 grant from the state Department of Environmental Protection.

The plan, presented to the committee by Bryce M. Bennett of the township engineer's office, sets the goal of creating a park along five miles of the creek from Route 9 to Barnegat Bay.

"This isn't really even the first step," said Mayor John P. Kelly. "It's

"This isn't really even the first step. It's something we have to do to move to the first step."

— Mayor John P. Kelly

something we have to do to move to the first step."

The committee had applied for the DEP grant to study the possibility of creating a township park on land between Route 9 and Railroad Avenue near the creek's flood gate, Bennett said.

"That would definitely be where any kind of park would start," he said. "It's closest to the township's population center, and it could pro-

vide a swimming area. Most of the town swims there already."

But when the township received the grant, the DEP asked that the entire creek be studied for the possibility of a park, Bennett said.

Bennett said the length of the creek is undeveloped, and if land could be acquired, the creek could be accessed by boaters and hikers in several places.

Kelly said the plan would require

grants from the county and the federal government. The park would be run and operated by the county, he said.

Bennett did not give details about the size or cost of the project.

Committeeman Joseph F. Meglino said some residents are concerned about the plan.

"Most of the land you're talking about near the creek is privately owned," he said. "The people living there don't want to see a lot of boaters and hikers going through their back yards."

Kelly said any eventual parkland, other than the area near the floodgate, was in the distant future.

"All we're hoping for now is to get state Green Acres funding so we can build a small swimming area," he said. "The rest of the plan is just a concept, something to shoot for down the line."

— Michael Pritchard

JOHN P. KELLY
MAYOR / COMMITTEEMAN

KENNETH G. HOLMAN
COMMITTEEMAN

JOSEPH F. MEGLINO
COMMITTEEMAN

JOETTE GRUNNER DODDS
TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR

TOWNSHIP OF EAGLESWOOD
RR #1 - DIVISION ST.
WEST CREEK, N J 08092
(609) 296-3040

September 14, 1988

WJRZ
1001 Beach Avenue
Manahawkin, New Jersey

Re: Public Announcement

Dear Sirs:

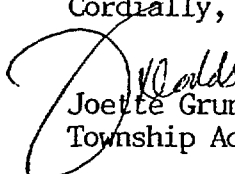
The Eagleswood Township Committee will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday September 27, 1988 at Eagleswood Village Recreation Building on Route 9 concerning a Draft Recreational Plan for a park in Eagleswood Township.

Please announce under your Community Notes time the following announcement:

The Township Committee of the Township of Eagleswood will host a Public Hearing for the purpose of taking public comment on a proposed park in the Township. The area in consideration is land along the Westecunk Creek. The Draft Recreational Plan Grant is being funded by the DEP's Division of Local Coastal Planning. The Hearing will start at 7:00pm at Eagleswood Village on Rt 9, West Creek, New Jersey.

Thank you for your time.

Cordially,


Joette Grunner Dodds
Township Administrator/Clerk

JOHN P. KELLY
MAYOR / COMMITTEEMAN

KENNETH G. HOLMAN
COMMITTEEMAN

JOSEPH F. MEGLINO
COMMITTEEMAN

JOETTE GRUNNER DODDS
TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATOR

TOWNSHIP OF EAGLESWOOD
RR #1 - DIVISION ST.
WEST CREEK, N.J. 08092
(609) 296-3040

The Press, Atlantic City, N.J. — Monday, September 19, 1988

D3

LEGALS

LEGALS

LEGALS

Pub: Sept. 19, 1988

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Township Committee of the Township of Eagleswood will hold a Public Hearing on September 27, 1988 at 7:00 PM at the Eagleswood Village Recreation Center on Rt. 9 in Staffordville. The purpose is to receive public comment on the Local Coastal Planning Grant Draft of Proposed Recreational Area in Eagleswood Township. The Public Comments will be incorporated into the final submission to the Local Coastal Planning Grant of the NJDEP.

Joette C. Dodds
Township Administrator/Clerk

Printer's Fee: \$11.70 Order No: 13448
Pub. Sep 19, '88

September 27, 1988

PUBLIC HEARING

Township of Eagleswood

7:00 pm

The Public Hearing was advertised in the Atlantic City Press on Monday September 19, 1988 and posted in public places in the township. Copies of the Public Notice were also distributed to the Tuckerton Beacon and Asbury Park Press and WJRZ.

Press: David Moore - Beacon
Mike Pritchard - Asbury Park Press

Present: Mayor John P. Kelly, Deputy Mayor Holman, Committeeman Meglino, Township Attorney Terry Brady, Township Administrator Joette Dodds and Township Engineer Bryce Bennett.

The Mayor opened the Public Hearing and turned the meeting over to Bryce Bennett of Ernst, Ernst and Lissenden Engineering firm.

Bryce Bennett proceeded to explain to the public assembled, the concept behind the Draft Recreational Plan for the Westecunk Creek Waterfront P Recreational Park, using the map exhibits. In examining both the directives of the state Outdoor Recreational Plan and the Local Coastal Planning Grant, there appears to be a favoring of the type of proposal the township has presented. This would include hiking, canoeing, swimming and walking trails, while creating more access to the water for for the public. The necessary lands to create the proposed continuous corridor of park land starting on Mill Street up to Railroad Avenue and up to Forge Road could be acquired in several manners: purchase, conservation easement to continue the open space and donation of land.

Bryce Bennett also spoke about the positive impact of the park area: more recreational facilities available for the public use and a fuller use of the Westecunk Creek. There would be a maintenance of environmental quality to keep the land as a park and not be developed in other areas.

The negative impact would include a disturbance of the wildlife while some building is going on, but this would be temporary, and a decrease in land that would be a tax ratable. But at the samethe area would be more valuable.

1. Paul Barylski - Silver Lake Drive asked if copies of the draft plan would be available. The mayor said yes, copies can be purchased in the Clerk's office.

2. Committeeman Meglino - asked if any studies had been done on the numbers of people who would use the park and if there had been an impact study on traffic.

Bryce Bennett responded that due to the limitations of the finding an environmental study was done at this point.

The Mayor added he had met with both the Green Acres representatives and representatives of the Local Coastal Planning Departnebt and the interest was in a total creek corridor park, and funded the study as such. However we see the project in phases. Phase I is the establishment of a swimming and picnic area, and a hiking area from the saw Mill area to the Flood Gate Area.

Phase II would involve seeking Green Acres funding as a commitment, The funding would be in the form of a 75% loan and 25% grant. If the funding is available then Ocean County has said they will be very interested in working with the township on the park. The public Hearing tonight is to explain the conceptional proposal to the public.

Jerry Kasavage - Dock Road expressed a concern in the disruption of the tax ratable base.

Paul Barylski - Silver Lake Drive - spoke about his concern over the past crowd problems at the Flood Gate area and how would this be policed in the future. He objected to the large scope of the park and was also concerned with security. He would like to see basic community recreational areas like a baseball field, swings a sand box area for children. He also expressed a concern over who would use the park.

The mayor responded that the county participation in the park will assist

the township with police and security and the people that frequent the A Paul King Park and Tip Seaman Park are mostly residents of their respective towns, as probably it will be the case here.

Betty Cranmer - Rt 9 also spoke out in favor of the township providing a children's area where swings and other recreational items could be provided and she asked about frequency of water testing of the area.

The mayor responded that this is not a final plan but a draft in order to start the process of getting a park planned and water testing has been done, but the last date is not known in the past few years.

Malcolm Burd-Mill Street Asked if an historical study of the area had been done.

The Mayor responded that it was not a requirement of this phase of the project.

Jerry Kasavage-Dock Road Was concerned about informing the residents through means other than the newspapers. He suggested using a newsletter to the residents.

The Mayor said that he had met with the Recreation Commission, Planning Board, and Zoning Board and Environmental Commission. The residents have had the opportunity to see the articles in the newspapers as well as have the park proposal discussed at the Township Meetings.

Dot Hall- Forge Road Asked how did the park plan come about. The Mayor responded that over several years the Township Committee has assumed the responsibility providing recreational activities for the residents. This draft proposal will touch on some of these ideas and allow us to provide for safe recreational activities where over the years some of the swimming areas have become unsafe.

Several residents spoke about the OCMUA station on Mill Street and the odor that comes from it at different times. The Committee stated that previous testing of the water did not turn up any pollution.

Motion to close the Public Hearing: Meglino Seconded: Holman
Roll Call Vote: Meglino-yes, Holman-yes, Kelly-yes

Resolution 146-88

RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAGLESWOOD, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR THE RECEIPT OF LOCAL COASTAL PLANNING GRANT FUNDS FOR THE WESTECUNK CREEK WATERFRONT RECREATIONAL PARK, DRAFT RECREATIONAL PLAN.

Motion: Holman Seconded: Meglino
Roll Call Vote: Holman-yes, Meglino-yes, Kelly-yes

Meeting recessed until regular township meeting: 7:50 pm

Attest

Approve

Township Administrator/Clerk

Mayor

RESOLUTION 146-88

**RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
EAGLESWOOD, COUNTY OF OCEAN, STATE OF
NEW JERSEY, AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION
OF A CONTRACT WITH THE NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION FOR THE RECEIPT OF LOCAL
COASTAL PLANNING GRANT FUNDS FOR THE
WESTECUNK CREEK WATERFRONT
RECREATION PARK, DRAFT RECREATION
PLAN.**

WHEREAS, the Township of Eagleswood is eligible for the receipt of funds from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Local Coastal Planning Grant Program in connection with the development of the Westecunk Creek Waterfront Recreation Park, draft recreation plan; and

WHEREAS, said draft recreation plan has been submitted to public hearing and comment at the September 27, 1988 meeting of the Eagleswood Township Committee; and

WHEREAS, in order to receive said grant funding for the development of said park and draft recreation plan, it is necessary for the Township of Eagleswood to enter into an agreement with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Township of Eagleswood to receive said funds from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Local Coastal Planning Grant Program in accordance with the attached agreement.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Township Committee of the Township of Eagleswood, County of Ocean, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. That the Mayor and Township Clerk are hereby authorized to execute the attached agreement with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Local Coastal Planning Grant Program for the receipt of grant funds for the Westecunk Creek Waterfront Recreation Park, draft recreation plan.

2. That said draft recreation plan is hereby approved by the Mayor and Township Committee.

